

What is claimed is:

1. A compactor wheel mountable on an axle of a compaction machine, said compactor wheel comprising:

- 5 a hub mountable to an axle of a compaction machine;
a rim mounted around the outer circumference of said hub, said rim having a face and an inner circumferential edge and an outer circumferential edge;
a plurality of compaction cleats circumferentially spaced on, transversely spaced across and mounted to said face of said rim; and
10 an axle guard system comprising a cleat-free area formed circumferentially around said rim on said face and extending widthwise from said inner edge across said rim toward said outer edge at least about the width of one of said cleats.

15 2. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 1, wherein said axle guard system further comprises at least one circumferential barrier mounted on said cleat-free area so as to extend above said face.

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25 3. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 2, wherein said at least one circumferential barrier is mounted on said cleat-free area so as to extend radially outward from said face.

30 4. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 2, wherein said at least one circumferential barrier is mounted on said cleat-free area adjacent said inner circumferential edge of said rim.

35 5. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 2, wherein each of said cleats has a height, and said at least one circumferential barrier extends above said face a height greater than the height of said cleats.

40 6. A compactor wheel mountable on an axle of a compaction machine having a body suitable for compacting refuse, said compactor wheel comprising:

- 45 a hub mountable to an axle of a compaction machine;
a rim mounted around the outer circumference of said hub, said rim having a face and an inner circumferential edge and an outer circumferential edge;
a plurality of compactor wheel cleats circumferentially spaced on, transversely spaced across and mounted to the face of said rim; and

50 an axle guard system comprising at least one circumferential barrier extending above said face and adjacent said inner circumferential edge of said rim, wherein said compactor wheel is suitable for supporting the body of a compaction machine.

55 7. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 6, wherein said at least one circumferential barrier extends radially outward from said face.

8. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 6, wherein said at least one circumferential barrier comprises a ring-shaped wall.

60 9. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 6, wherein said at least one circumferential barrier comprises a plurality of circumferentially spaced fins.

10. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 9, wherein said compactor wheel has an inner row of said cleats mounted adjacent to said inner circumferential edge, one of said fins is mounted to said rim between each pair of adjacent cleats forming said row.

11. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 10, wherein said at least one circumferential barrier includes buttressing structure for support.

12. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 11, wherein said buttressing structure is a broadening of said at least one circumferential barrier at said face of said rim.

13. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 6, wherein said axle guard system further comprises a cleat-free area formed circumferentially around said rim on said face and extending widthwise from said inner edge across said rim toward said outer edge at least about the width of one of said cleats, said at least one circumferential barrier being mounted on said cleat-free area.

14. A compaction machine comprising:

a body suitable for compacting refuse, said body having opposite sides;

an axle having two ends and mounting said body; and

a compactor wheel mounted on each end of said axle, one compactor wheel on each side of said body, each said compactor wheel comprising:

a hub mounted to one end of said axle,

a rim mounted around the outer circumference of said hub, said rim having a face, an inner circumferential edge adjacent to one side of said body and an outer circumferential edge,

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a plurality of cleats circumferentially spaced on and mounted to said face of said rim, and

an axle guard system comprising at least one circumferential barrier extending above said face and adjacent said inner circumferential edge of said rim.

15. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 14, wherein said at least one circumferential barrier comprises a ring-shaped wall.

16. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 14, wherein said at least one circumferential barrier comprises a plurality of circumferentially spaced fins.

17. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 16, wherein said compactor wheel has an inner row of said cleats mounted adjacent to said inner circumferential edge, one of said fins is mounted to said rim between each pair of adjacent cleats forming said row.

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~~18. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 17, wherein~~
said at least one circumferential barrier includes buttressing
structure for support.

5 ~~19. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 18, wherein~~
said buttressing structure is a broadening of said at least one
circumferential barrier at said face of said rim.

10 ~~20. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 14, wherein~~
said axle guard system further comprises a cleat-free area
formed circumferentially around said rim on said face and
extending widthwise from said inner edge across said rim
toward said outer edge at least about the width of one of said
cleats, said at least one circumferential barrier being
15 ~~mounted on said cleat-free area.~~

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21. A compactor wheel mountable on an axle of a compaction machine, said compactor wheel comprising:

a hub mountable to an axle of a compaction machine;

a rim mounted around the outer circumference of said hub, said rim having a face and an

5 inner circumferential edge and an outer circumferential edge;

a plurality of compaction cleats circumferentially spaced on, transversely spaced across and mounted to said face of said rim; and

an axle guard system comprising a cleat-free area formed circumferentially around said rim on said face and extending widthwise from said inner edge across said rim toward said outer

10 edge at least about the width of a compaction cleat.

22. The compactor wheel as set forth in claim 21, wherein said cleat-free area extends widthwise from said inner edge across said rim toward said outer edge up to about 10 inches.

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23. A compaction machine comprising:

a body suitable for compacting refuse, said body having opposite sides;

an axle having two ends and mounting said body; and

a compactor wheel according to claim 21 mounted on each end of said axle, one compactor wheel on each side of said body.

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